



EPA Community Involvement in Libby, Montana: A Summary

Approach: The Libby Site Team is committed to a pro-active, meaningful community involvement program in Libby. We aim to be direct and open with Libby community members regarding EPA's investigations, health risks and future plans. We strive to make all relevant information available to the public. We work to identify and address community concerns. We aim to be sincere, caring, and responsive as we carry out our work in Libby.

Main Community Concerns:

- Long-term health care
- Future exposure from vermiculite left in place i.e., in walls
- Future cleanup of vermiculite insulation
- Property value/real estate concerns
- Economic development

Considerations:

- Wide range of reactions to activities related to asbestos contamination.
- Community divided on which of the above concerns are most important.
- Less media coverage regionally and nationally (raises fears for some that Libby may no longer be a priority/ pleases others with regard to Libby's image)
- Budget uncertainties are delaying or precluding cleanup of attic insulation and yards in Troy and the mine
- Change in EPA administration raises fears for some that Libby may no longer be a priority
- National implications (awareness continues to grow about vermiculite in homes across the U.S., vermiculite processing centers around the country, national asbestos standards and policy)

Outstanding/Upcoming Issues:

- Budget concerns
- Business cleanups (relocation, lost revenue)
- Operations and maintenance
- Local infrastructure's ability to deal with long-term asbestos-related health care needs; asbestos-related disease screening; asbestos-related cleanup (sampling, handling, removal, disposal);

- Training in asbestos-related topics
- Troy Cleanup
- Cleanup jobs (layoffs, contractors)
- Asbestos Research Center
- Risk Assessment Methodology and Performance Evaluation Study

<u>Activities:</u>	- Since November 1999, the Libby site team has been/is involved in many
Past	community outreach and involvement activities. (✓ = ongoing)
and	
Current	
✓	- Opened a local EPA Information Center (staffed by a local resident with an Information Repository, full-time regular day-time and evening hours);
✓	- Responded to an average of 100-200 inquiries per week for several years. Number of inquiries has lessened by 2004, but Information Center continues to be used intensively as a clearinghouse for information, meeting place and center for Libby cleanup related activities.
✓	- Place frequent ads locally to advertise EPA events and actions;
✓	- Helped the community establish a Community Advisory Group (CAG) which meets monthly (bi-weekly for first three years) and employs a trained facilitator. EPA attends all the meetings and serves as a resource to the CAG;
✓	- Record and make CAG meeting tapes available to the public - Conducted more than 150 community interviews (to identify community concerns, collect information about exposure to asbestos, and serve as basis for EPA's Community Involvement Plan);
✓	- Participated in Troy and Libby Health Fairs each summer since 2000;
✓	- Hosted public meetings (January, March, July 2000) to discuss sampling results, clean-up investigation, and future plans;
✓	- Discuss sampling results with residents and business owners whose property we've sampled (via personal letters, phone calls, and individual meetings);
✓	- Write and distribute site Fact Sheets
✓	- Established a site mailing list and Mailed Site Information directly to thousands of residents and interested parties;
✓	- Set up/update an Internet web page specific to Libby; - Initiated and chaired a planning committee for an "Asbestos and Public Health" Conference in Libby for September 2000 (coordinating with local, state and federal agencies and community members);
✓	- Publish a bi-weekly (weekly for first 3 years) "Ask EPA Q & A" in local papers since Feb. 2000 (addresses timely and recurring community concerns);
✓	- Sponsor travel for community members to attend related conferences;
✓	- Provided stress management workshops;
✓	- Speak at various community organizations' meetings;

- √ - Respond to numerous media inquiries;
- √ - Coordinate nationally with EPA HQ and Regional Offices;
- √ - Coordinate with other agencies and entities (ATSDR, Montana DEQ, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Lincoln County Environmental Health Department, St. John's Lutheran Hospital, Lincoln County Commissioners, and Libby elected officials);
- √ - Conducted a Media Campaign on the effects of 2nd hand smoke, with emphasis on the synergy between tobacco smoke and asbestos exposure. Local paper still printing public service ads.
 - Coordinated information exchange between Libby residents and community members from other Montana and Idaho Superfund sites.
 - Met with business community and real estate professionals in Libby to understand and try to resolve issues regarding economic effect of EPA activities on Libby.
 - Arranged for representatives of federal mortgage insurers, lenders and loan underwriters to attend meetings in Libby and answer community's questions about effect of Superfund on real estate transactions
- √ Coordinated with the Lincoln County Dept. Of Env. Health and other state and federal agencies to design, produce and distribute a resource book on asbestos related issues.
- √ Provide contract support for constant on-site community involvement support during screening and remedial activities.
 - Coordinated with Lincoln County Economic Development Office on Brownfields activities
- √ - Provide specific cleanup/relocation information to home and business owners who are undergoing cleanup.
- √ - Assisted the community in applying for and receiving a Technical Assistance Grant. EPA attends most meetings and serves as a resource to the TAG;
- √ - Attend meetings with business representatives in Libby to economic development issues (Healthy Communities Initiative, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club)
 - Planned and funded a day-and-a-half Economic Development Workshop "Dream It, Do It" in Libby in May 2003 (coordinating with local, state and federal agencies and community members); assisted with a follow up 6 months later.
- √ - Formed an Operations and Maintenance Work Group to proactively explore long-term O&M issues in Libby.
 - cleanup completion letter
 - notification to renters regarding potential contamination
 - resident and contractors info. on how to deal with vermiculite
- Provided an intensive two-day risk workshop in Denver to six Libby residents (4 TAG, TAG Tech. Advisor, Co. Sanitarian) to explain some of the basic science and processes EPA is using in decision making in Libby.

Libby Team: Jim Christiansen, Remedial Project Manager (303) 312-6748
Peggy Churchill, Remedial Project Manager (303) 312-6137
Aubrey Miller, Toxicologist, MD (303) 884-7857
Wendy Thoni, Community Involvement (406) 457-5037
Matt Cohn, Attorney (303) 312-6853
Kelcey Land, Enforcement Specialist (303) 312-6393
Mary Goldade, Chemist (303) 312-7024